(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently purchased 200 tonnes of Gold from International Monetary Fund (IMF); and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has purchased 200 metric tonnes of gold from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the IMF's limited gold sales programme. This has been done as part of RBI's foreign exchange reserve management operations. The purchase has increased the ratio of gold holdings to that of foreign exchange with RBI.

Allowances and fringe benefits for Government employees

1284. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Government employees and officers are not getting allowances and fringe benefits at par with nationalized bank although Hon'ble Supreme Court has given an order to give them salary, DA and other allowances at par with nationalized bank?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): Central Government employees are granted pay and allowances based on the recommendations of successive Pay Commissions. The salary, DA and allowances applicable at present are based on the recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission as accepted by the Government.

Harassment of common investors

1285. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that common investors are harassed by broker in trading and dematerialized account;

(b) if so, whether Government is going to survey the situation; and

(c) whether Government would give any direction to Security and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to look into the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) receives complaints against all registered intermediaries associated with securities market including stock brokers and depository participants on matters relating to trading and demat accounts respectively. The complaints from investors, as and when received by SEBI are forwarded to the concerned Stock Exchange and Depository, who are suitably empowered to resolve the grievances, for redressal. The complaints received by SEBI, do not indicate that common investors are generally harassed by brokers.

(b) The stock exchanges and depositories have their own administrative mechanism for handling and redressing the investor complaints. In terms of the SEBI (Stock Brokers and